

40 DEFENSE

Seven gap command

The Defensive Line

The Defensive Line : Strong Defensive End, Defensive Under Tackle, Weak Defensive Tackle, Weak Defensive End. Through proper positioning, stance, play, techniques and hard work the Defensive Line can dictate the offensive line's blocking assignments therefore taking a positive step toward winning the battles at the line of scrimmage.

Position (in base)

The Strong Defensive End, by call, staying square to the line of scrimmage, takes a 7 technique on the Tight End or a wide 6 technique on the offensive tackle. The Under Tackle, staying square to the line of scrimmage, takes a wide strong technique (A gap) on the offense center. The Weak Defensive Tackle, staying square to the line of scrimmage, takes a 3 technique on the weak offensive guard. The Weak Defense End, by call, lines up square or cocked. By design with a split end, he takes a wide 6 technique on the weak offensive tackle. With offensive end tight, he takes a 7 technique on the offensive end.

It is important to remember that the above are positions in the base defense. Positions will change with line stunts, loops, and twists.

Stance

The three stances used by the defensive line are elongated, balanced and bunched. The elongated stance is used for a speed attack, the bunched stance for a pure strength attack, and the balanced stance is a mixture of both speed and strength.

The Strong Defensive End has an balanced stance in the 7 technique on the tight end, and an elongated stance in the wide 6 technique on the offensive tackle. The Under Tackle is always in a bunched stance. The Weak Defensive Tackle is always in a balanced stance. The Weak Defensive End is always in a elongated stance. Each lineman must adjust their 3 point stance - left or right hand down, so their first step is directed toward the gap they need to rip. Footwork is extremely important.

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Play

There are many techniques that can be used to get to and control a gap. The defensive line will use the arm under rip technique. The forearm away from the gap to be controlled is the forearm used to rip through the outside edge of the chest to the armpit. Your gap side arm is used to apply extra force across your chest to the offensive man. You must stay square to the LOS.

Your 3 point stance, left or right handed, must be switched so your first step is toward the gap to be controlled. Using this technique keeps the gap side arm, hip, and leg free to attack blockers or ball carriers in that gap. Never attack past the offensive linemen's heels until you **see** the ball.

ATTACKING THE TRAP

For the offensive line to trap, linemen must block down toward the ball on the play side. These are called "downs". When you step to your gap and ready yourself to rip and your man downs, you are going to be trapped by a backside pulling offensive lineman.

The defensive line is responsible for collapsing any and all traps. If your man downs inside, you must step down inside with him. By staying square and stepping down inside with the offensive lineman, the hole for the trap is squeezed down. Next, the defensive lineman being trapped attacks the trapping backside offensive lineman and causes a tremendous collision. This will squeeze the squeeze and collapse the trap.

When you step to your gap and ready yourself to rip and your man pulls back across the center, your man is the "pulling offensive lineman" in the trap. Your gap responsibility is void. You must chase the pulling lineman, get in his pocket. He will lead you to the trap and the ball carrier.

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The Linebackers

The Linebackers : Rip Backer (strong outside backer), Sam Backer (strong inside backer), Will Backer (weak inside backer), Quick Backer (weak outside backer).

Position (in base)

The positions of the backers change on every defense called. The following are base defense positions.

The Rip Backer takes a wide 9 technique on the tight end at 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. Sam Backer sets up on strong B gap at 4 yards off the line of scrimmage. Will Backer sets up on weak A gap at 4 yards off the line of scrimmage. By formation, the Quick Linebacker has three positions. With a weak split end, split the distance between the offensive tackle and the split end at 5 yards off the line of scrimmage. With a weak tight end, take a wide 9 technique on the weak tight end at 3 yards off the line of scrimmage. With a weak slot back, set up on the slot man's outside shoulder at 3 yards off the line of scrimmage.

Stance

All linebackers will have the same stance. Balanced feet shoulder width apart, slightly up on the balls of the feet. Legs must be in a slightly squat position. This position can be accomplished by getting good flexion in the hips, knees and ankles. The back flat and flexed at the hip, driving the shoulders slightly forward (about 20 degrees from the top). Head up and eyes wide open. Hands in front and chest high.

Play

The Reads: Sam and Will Backers read through the guard to near back. Mirror the first step of the near back. If the guard attacks you, but the near back goes laterally, either way - get off the block of the guard and mirror the direction of the near back.

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Guard Read Rules: 1). If he attacks you, you attack him gap side as near to the line of scrimmage as possible; 2). If he pulls (either way), parallel his movement on your side of the line of scrimmage ; 3). If he drive blocks in a double team, immediately attack line of scrimmage at his away hip; 4). If he squats for pass pro, immediately get to your pass responsibility.

The Reads: Rip Backer primary read is the Tight End's head. If the head goes inside (to the ball), attack his outside hip to the heels and prepare for the tackle or prepare to rip the outside of the lead blocker. You must stay square to the LOS. If the head goes outside, depending on your gap responsibility, rip his inside or outside. If the head releases up field, chuck your assigned gap, than get to your pass responsibility. The tight end does not release from the line of scrimmage clean.

Quick Backer, versus split end, first quick read is split ends first move, then to near back for direction. Must be in command of weak outside run containment. Versus weak tight end. Quick Backer primary read is the weak tight end's head. If the head goes inside (to the ball), attack his outside hip to the heels and prepare for the tackle or prepare to rip the outside of the lead blocker. You must stay square to the LOS. If the head goes outside, depending on your gap responsibility, rip his inside or outside. If the head releases up field, chuck your assigned gap, than get to your pass responsibility. The weak tight end does not release from the line of scrimmage clean.

Force and Flow Away

Inside backers have a three gap responsibility. **1).** The dive gap: that is the gap assigned to you by the defensive formation call. **2).** The force gap: that is two gaps outside (away from the center) of your dive gap. **3).** The flow gap: that is two gaps inside (toward the center) of your dive gap.

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The Linebackers

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It is important to remember that as you move either in force or flow steps, you are seeing the holes in the line of scrimmage exactly the same as the running back sees them. Clear and clutter is what you see. The running back is looking for clear to run through. You are looking for clear to make the tackle. You see the running back, you see clear, jump him there. Do not over run the defensive scheme. SEE-THINK-DO, hesitation will kill the defense.

The first backer to the point of attack is the force backer. The force backer must take on any lead blocker on the blockers outside hip and force the following running back to the inside of his force. If the force backer has a free shot at the running back, always tackle head across the man, driving for his outside hip.

The second backer is the flow backer. The flow backer must take a slightly deeper route to clear to avoid any wash of players. The flow backer can either be the recipient of many clean shots at the running back or the goat of missing "clears" resulting in offensive plus plays.

Steps:

Inside backers step to their respective dive gaps with inside foot first.

FORCE: Second step to force. **FLOW:** Inside foot first to dive, third step to flow.

Shuffle step when you can, keep yourself as square to the line of scrimmage as possible. Taking steps is a practice, practice, practice technique. Remember this, taking a bad step is far better than taking no step at all. A stand and read linebacker is nothing more than a blocking dummy.

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The Defensive Backs

The Defensive Backs : Strong Corner, Strong Safety, and Weak Corner.

Position (in base)

There are a multitude of offensive pass formations. The following are positions in base cover 1 defense vs. split end, tight end and strong wide receiver only.

Strong Corner: Lines up on the strong side of the offense on the widest receiver, seven yards off the line of scrimmage and two yards inside the receiver. **Strong Safety:** Lines up on the tight end, eight yards off the line of scrimmage and two yards outside the tight end. **Weak Corner:** Lines up on the widest weak receiver, seven yards off the line of scrimmage and two yards inside the receiver.

Stance

The stance for all defensive backs is the staggered foot 2 point stance playing slightly on the balls of the feet. In good back pedal position with good flexion in the ankles, knees and hips. Bent slightly forward at the waist approximately ten degrees with back straight. Hands in front of chest, palms forward, fingers upward.

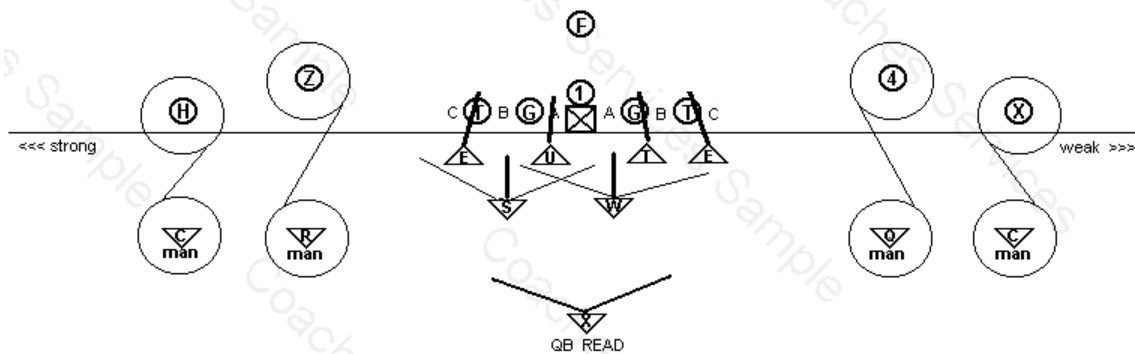
Play

The defensive backs first responsibility is pass. To that end, all defensive backs take "check steps" on the snap of the ball. During this "check step" phase, each defensive back must make his proper read for pass or run support.

With the receiver wide, the d-back takes an inside position. This position helps with slant, in, and post coverage and forces the offense more to fade, go, and out response. Use of the hand chuck is necessary if the receiver attempts an inside release or cross your face. **Do not let the receiver take a clean inside release.** With the receiver tight, the read is block or release. The key to the block read is the receivers head. Head inside, block inside, step to run support responsibility. On release, the set up is outside the receiver. This position helps with out, short corner, and shoot coverage. The linebacker drop to the inside provides help with post, drag, and curl coverage.

40 - man base

vs. ACE (1 back)



D-Line = SDE - elongated wide 6 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack.
 WDT - balanced 3 technique. WDE - elongated wide 6 technique.
 C gap is responsible for QB in option.

Backers

Sam = RUN: B gap responsibility to ace back. Force to strong C gap, flow to weak A gap.
 PASS: Cover 1 on Ace Back to strong side.

Will = RUN: A gap responsibility to ace back. Force to weak C gap, flow to strong B gap.
 PASS: Cover 1 on Ace Back to weak side.

Rip = PASS: Head-up on strong inside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

Quik = PASS: Head up on weak inside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

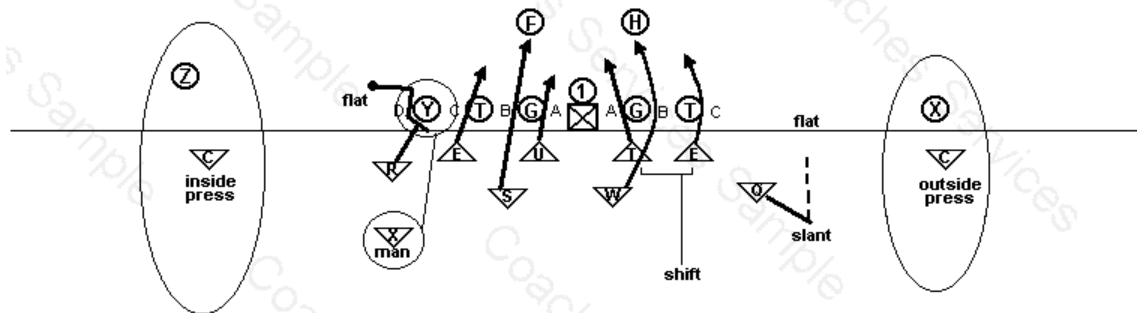
D-Backs

Strong Corner = PASS: Head-up on strong outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

Strong Safety = PASS: Head -up on center and 12 yards off LOS. Read the quarterback and move to the ball in the air. Free one man zone.

Weak Corner = PASS: Head up on weak outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

40 - BB Gun - Press



D-Line = SDE - elongated 6 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack. WDT - balanced 1 technique on WOG.
WDE - elongated 5 technique on WOT.

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to flow away.
PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone.

Sam = FIRE STRONG B GAP. Attack outside hip of any pick-up block.
PASS: NO COVERAGE.

Will = FIRE WEAK B GAP. Attack outside hip of any pick-up block.
PASS: NO COVERAGE.

Quik = RUN: Set-up between WOT and Split End at 5 yards off LOS. C and D containment.
PASS: Stop Slant position, then drop to flats to sidelines zone.

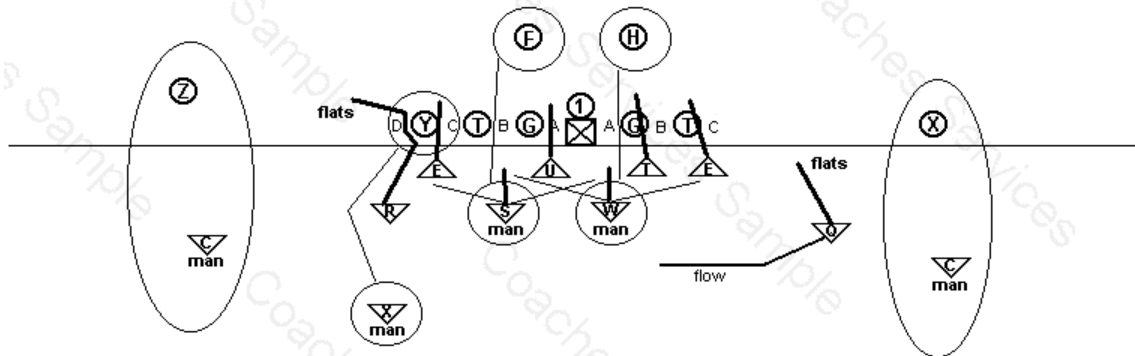
D-Backs

Strong Corner = PASS: 2 yards inside press coverage on strong outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1.
Do not let receiver take inside route.

Strong Safety = RUN: Key TE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside hip.
PASS: Key TE head. Release, by positioning, play for inside route.

Weak Corner = PASS: Outside press coverage on outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

40 - man base vs. Pro



D-Line = SDE - elongated 7 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack. WDT - balanced 3 technique on WOG.
WDE - elongated 6 technique.

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to flow away.
PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone.

Sam = RUN: Step to B gap DIVE. Strong D force gap. Weak A flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Will = RUN: Step to weak A gap DIVE. Weak C force gap. Strong B flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Quik = RUN: Set-up between WOT and Split End at 5 yards off LOS. C and D containment.
PASS: Stop Slant position. To flats and sidelines.

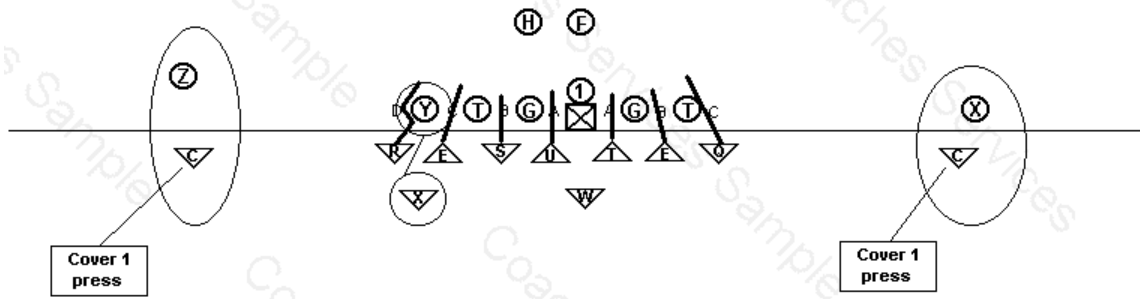
D-Backs

Strong Corner = PASS: 2 yards inside and 7 yards off the LOS on outside receiver. Cover 1.
Do not let the receiver cross your face.

Strong Safety = RUN: Key TE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside hip.
PASS: Key TE head. Release, cover 1 on TE.

Weak Corner = PASS: Head up on weak outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

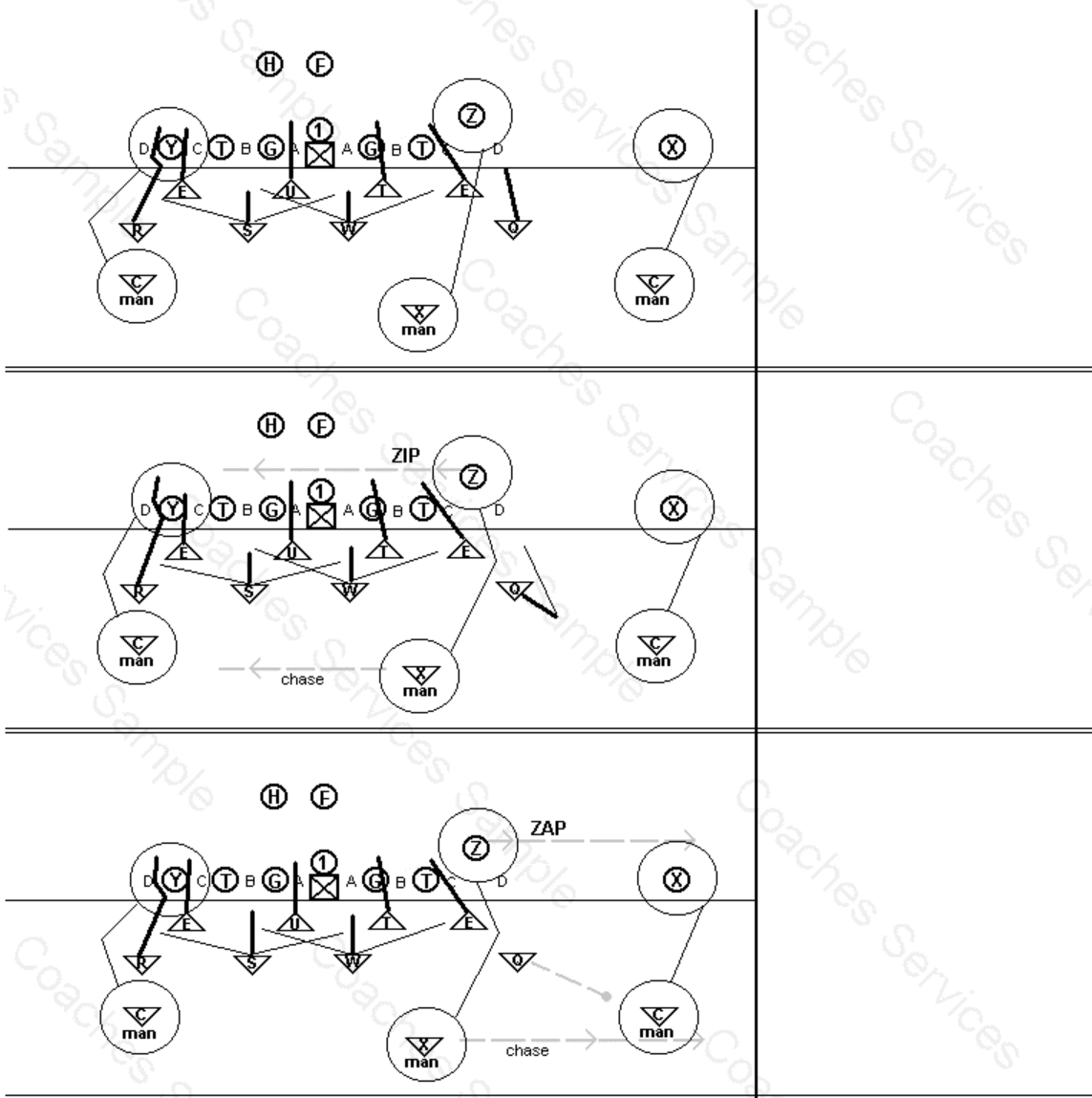
40 - man 7 PRESS vs. Pro



40 - man base

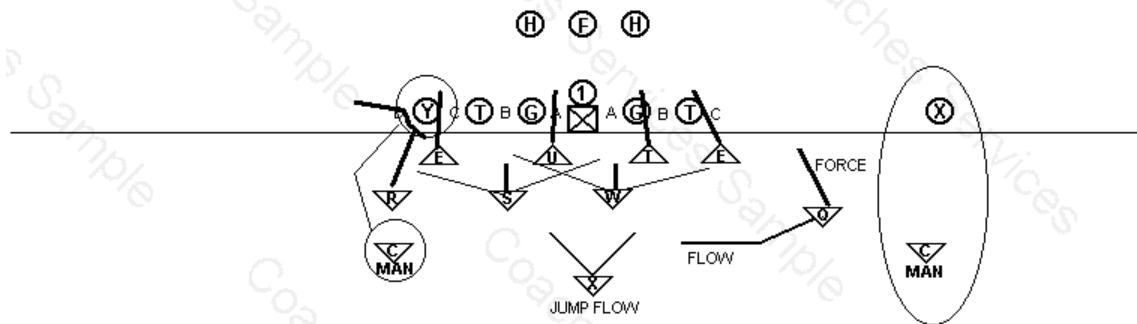
vs. SLOT

adjustments to zip - zap motion.



40 - man base

vs. Split Full House



D-Line = SDE - elongated 7 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack. WDT - balanced 3 technique on WOG.
WDE - elongated wide 6 technique on WOT.

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to away flow.
PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone. Must get chuck on TE.

Sam = RUN: Step to B gap DIVE. Strong D force gap, weak A flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Will = RUN: Step to weak A gap DIVE. Weak C force gap, strong B flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Quik = RUN: Set-up between WOT and Split End at 5 yards off LOS. C and D containment. Run away - flow in front of LOS. PASS: Stop Slant position, then drop to flats to sidelines zone.

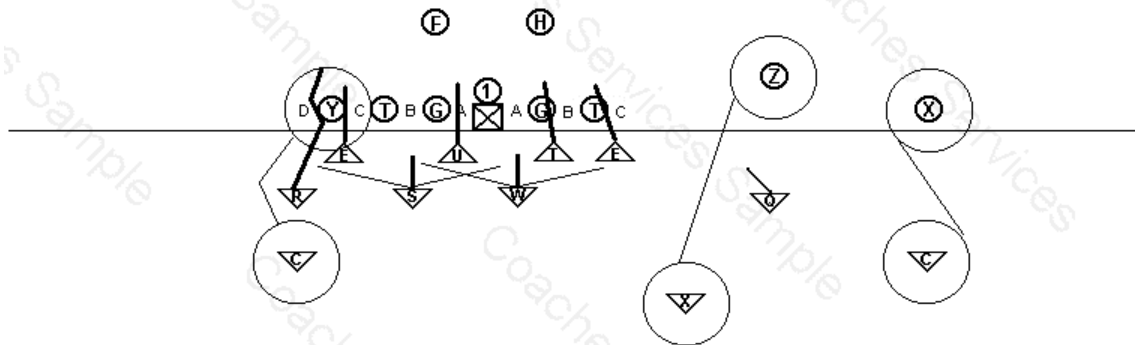
D-Backs

Strong Corner = RUN: Key TE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside
PASS: Key TE head. Release, by positioning, play for inside route.

Strong Safety = RUN: Head up on OC and 12 yards off LOS. Read and jump first flow, inside out.
PASS: Read OC pass pro and play QB's head. Man cover on last man out of backfield
- FB man cover 1.

Weak Corner = PASS: Head up on weak outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

40 - man base vs. Twins



D-Line = SDE - elongated 7 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack. WDT - balanced 3 technique on WOG.
WDE - elongated wide 6 technique on WOT.

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to away flow.
PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone. Must get chuck on TE.

Sam = RUN: Step to B gap DIVE. Strong D force gap, weak A flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Will = RUN: Step to weak A gap DIVE. Weak C force gap, strong B flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Quik = RUN: Set-up between WOT and Split End at 5 yards off LOS. C and D containment. Run away - flow in front of LOS. PASS: Stop Slant position, then drop to flats to sidelines zone.

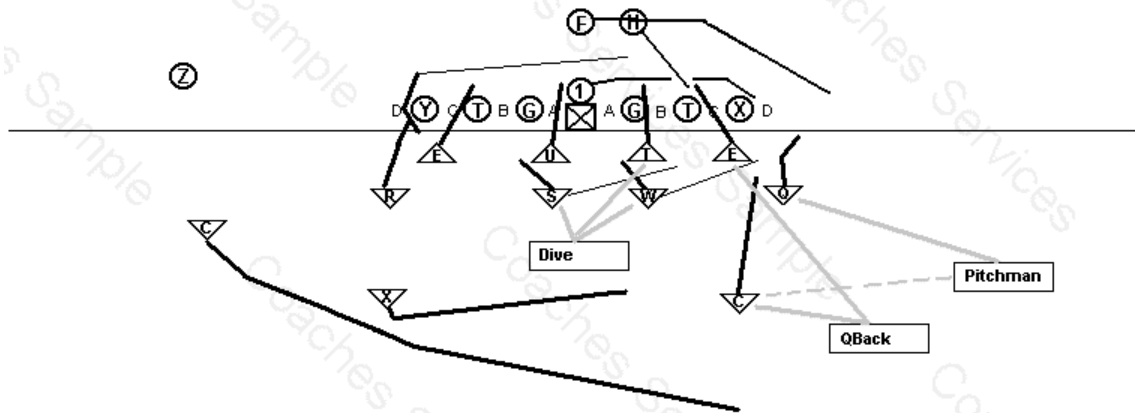
D-Backs

Strong Corner = RUN: Key TE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside
PASS: Key TE head. Release, by positioning, play for inside route.

Strong Safety = RUN: 4 yards inside inside TWIN and 12 yards off LOS. Last man run support.
PASS: Read OT pass pro, Cover 1 on inside TWIN.

Weak Corner = PASS: Head up on weak outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

40 - man base shift vs. possible veer



D-Line = SDE - elongated 7 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack.
 WDT - balanced 3 technique on WOG. (VEER: B gap - DIVE)
 WDE - elongated wide 6 technique on WSE. (VEER: C gap - QB)

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to away flow.
 PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone. Must get chuck on TE.

SHIFT POSITION FOR SAM AND WILL is stack with same gap responsibilities as base.

Sam = RUN: Step to B gap DIVE. Strong C force gap, weak B flow gap.
 PASS: Cover 1 near back. (VEER: Dive back.)

Will = RUN: Step to weak A gap DIVE. Weak D force gap, strong A flow gap.
 PASS: Cover 1 near back. (VEER: Dive back.)

Quik = RUN: Set-up 2 yards outside and 2 yards off WSE. D gap responsibility. (VEER: The Pitchman)
 in front of LOS. PASS: Stop Slant position, then drop to flats to sidelines zone.

D-Backs

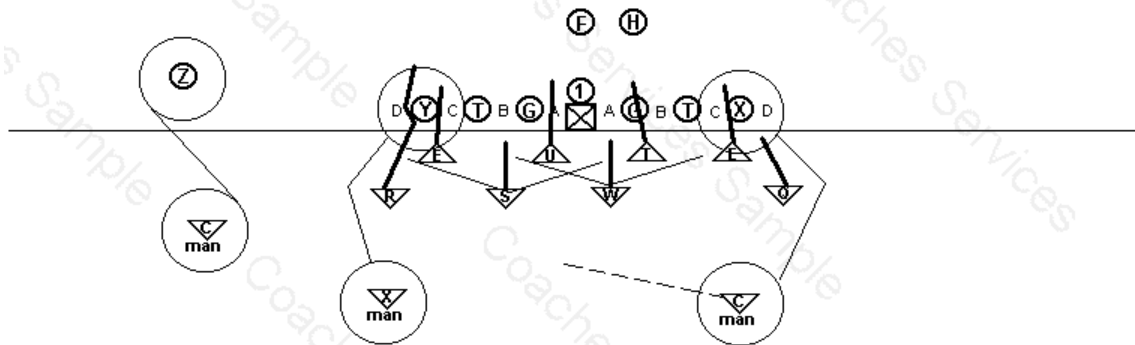
Strong Corner = PASS: 2 yards inside and 7 yards off WR. Cover 1.

Strong Safety = RUN: Stack Rip Backer at 10 yards off LOS. Key TE head.
 PASS: Read OC pass pro and play QB's head. Man cover on last man out of backfield
 - FB man cover 1.

Weak Corner = RUN: Key WSE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside
 VEER: C gap = WSE down - QB. WSE reach - The Pitchman.
 PASS: Key WSE head. Release, by positioning, play for inside route.

40 - man base

vs. Wing T w/wide receiver



D-Line = SDE - elongated 7 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack. WDT - balanced 3 technique on WOG.
WDE - balanced 7 technique on WSE.

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to flow away.
PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone.

Sam = RUN: Step to B gap DIVE. Strong D force gap, weak A flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Will = RUN: Step to weak A gap DIVE. Weak C force gap, strong B flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Quik = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of WSE. Slow to flow away.
PASS: Key WSE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone.

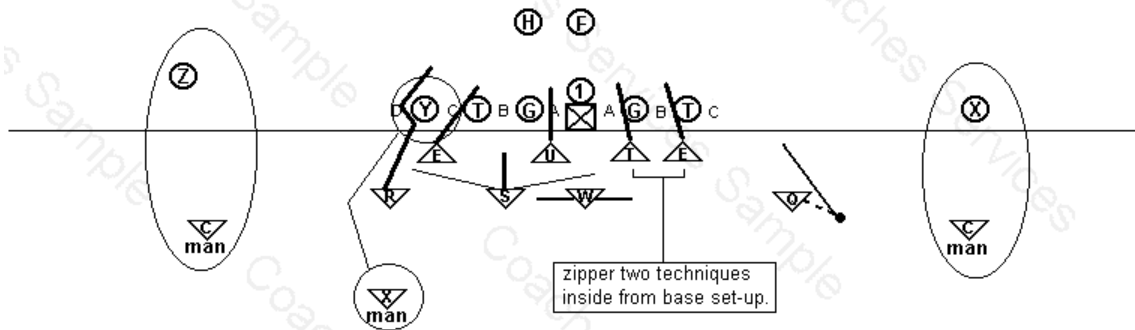
D-Backs

Strong Corner = PASS: 2 yards inside strong outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1.
Do not let receiver take inside route.

Strong Safety = RUN: Key TE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside hip.
PASS: Key TE head. Release, by positioning, play for inside route.

Weak Corner = RUN: Key WSE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside
PASS: Key WSE head. Release, by positioning, play for inside route.

40 - man - weak zipper vs. strong



D-Line = SDE - elongated 7 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack. WDT - balanced 1 technique on WOG.
 WDE - balanced 4 technique on WOT. (WDT and WDE are zippered 2 techniques inside base position)

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to flow away.
 PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone.

Sam = RUN: Step to B gap DIVE. Strong D force gap, weak A flow gap.
 PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Will = RUN: No dive gap responsibility. Read and react to flow. Weak C force gap, strong B flow gap.
 PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Quik = RUN: Set-up between WOT and Split End at 5 yards off LOS. C and D containment.
 PASS: Stop Slant position, then drop to flats to sidelines zone.

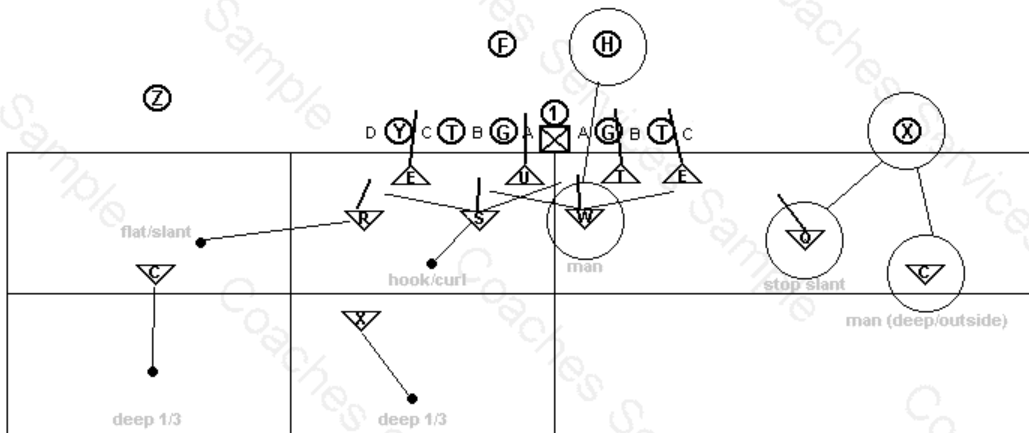
D-Backs

Strong Corner = PASS: 2 yards inside strong outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1.
 Do not let receiver take inside route.

Strong Safety = RUN: Key TE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside hip.
 PASS: Key TE head. Release, by positioning, play for inside route.

Weak Corner = PASS: Head up on weak outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1

40 - combo zone base



D-Line = SDE - elongated 7 technique. UT - balanced strong A gap attack. WDT - balanced 3 technique on WOG.
WDE - elongated 6 technique.

Backers

Rip = RUN: Responsible D gap containment. Attack through outside shoulder of TE. Slow to flow away.
PASS: Key TE, release upfield, drop to flats to sidelines zone.

Sam = RUN: Step to B gap DIVE. Strong D force gap. Weak A flow gap.
PASS: Read OG for pass pro. Drop to hook-to-curl zone.

Will = RUN: Step to weak A gap DIVE. Weak C force gap. Strong B flow gap.
PASS: Cover 1 near back.

Quik = RUN: Set-up between WOT and Split End at 5 yards off LOS. C and D containment.
PASS: Stop Slant position. Run with Split End on any inside route.

D-Backs

Strong Corner = PASS: Head up on strong outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS.
Drop to deep outside 1/3 zone.

Strong Safety = RUN: Key TE head. Down block attack his outside hip, reach block attack his inside hip.
PASS: Key TE head. Release, drop to deep middle 1/3 zone.

Weak Corner = PASS: Head up on weak outside receiver and 7 yards off LOS. Cover 1
Help inside, NO HELP OUTSIDE DEEP.